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## THE 1935 DELEGATE CONFERENCE

THE second Delegate Conference of the A. A. S. W. was held in Washington, February 15-17. During the three days chapter representatives, national committee members and observers met together in one room, well arranged for the purpose, in the Mayflower Hotel. Subject matter overlapped but there were no conflicting program sessions and interest was high. The Conference is, as the President, Dorothy Kahn, said, a newly adopted vehicle for appraising the state of our mind with reference to the continuing program of the professional organization. This appraisal, as it emerged from the recent meetings, provides for the chapters, committees, officers and staff a common springboard into continuing work.

The importance of this process at a time when social work finds itself in the limelight and in the midst of phenomenal growth, is readily conceded. Miss Kahn characterized the position in which social workers find themselves today as more conducive to bringing out sharp differences than to insuring fundamental agreement. The significant fact about the Delegate Conference is that it is a means for "exercising our capacities to reconcile our differences, to accept them when they are irreconcilable and to emphasize for our ultimate purpose those things on which we can reach fundamental agreement."

A certain tangible result of the exercise of those capacities is seen in the Preliminary Report which is printed in this issue of *The Compass*. Evidence of growth process in bringing about a meeting of minds, which was to be found in all the sessions, but which is difficult to transmit, could only be suggested in the Preliminary Report. It is of the nature of experience in participation—difficult to recapture or reproduce, when it has been disseminated.

Under the rare leadership of Dorothy Kahn who was in the chair during all of the sessions, three days of morning and afternoon meetings were devoted to discussion of subject matter of fundamental program interest in which attempt

was made to secure expression of common opinion there represented. An additional evening session was given over to action on administrative matters before the Association.

The subjects discussed took form under such items as: The Security Program, The Administration's Program for Security and Public Welfare, Federal, State and Local Cooperation in a Nation-wide Relief Program (broken down into consideration of transients, grants-in-aid with reference to mothers' aid and categorical relief in general, and a federal department of public welfare), Housing and Social Work, Social Insurance, and Health Services.

In recognition of the fact that success of social work programs rests largely upon the character of their administration, there was also discussion of current problems of qualified personnel and employment practices.

Among the discussion leaders who contributed greatly to progress in the sessions were Linton B. Swift, Kenneth Pray, Edith Abbott, Arthur Dunham, Abraham Goldfeld, and Beatrice P. Hodge. Their contribution in laying the basis for discussion was supplemented by assistance from Harry Lurie, Russell Kurtz, Ellery Reed, Dr. Ellen Potter, Joseph Moss, Rachael Childrey, John Ihlder, Helen Harris, Joseph Tufts, and others. Dr. Michael Davis as a specially invited guest lent his weight to the group's understanding of the subject in the session on Health Services.

The 270 participants representing 53 chapters (102 official delegates, 62 alternates, 53 observers and 53 committee members), found the facilitating rules, laid before them by Stanley P. Davies, Chairman of the Planning Committee, adapted to their purpose. Two kinds of votes were suggested by the Planning Committee for developing the thought of the conference and for any action that might be desired—a roll call or official vote and "sense of the meeting" or unofficial vote. Votes on expression of opinion, which required the simpler procedure, provided the Committee

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on Report of the Conference with focal material around which its report could be constructed. The difficult and continuous task of this Committee culminated in the Preliminary Report presented at the last session by its chairman, Lea Taylor, and with a few amendments suggested in discussion, accepted by the Conference. Apparently on the basis of the group conviction as to the effectiveness of the rules for discussion purposes, the "sense of the meeting" vote was invoked throughout the sessions, the business meeting only calling for recourse to the record vote.

Under these provisions and with the assistance of the specified leaders, the Conference addressed itself to the business of the program. With subject matter introduced, discussion developed with

freedom of participation. It was evident that those present represented a wide variety of social work functions, in multi-colored local settings. The experience brought them together with a sense of common purpose and interdependence growing out of the professional association of individuals. In contrast to a presentation of committee reports for acceptance, amendment or rejection, subjects of vital importance were introduced in a manner that would draw upon the work of committees, discussion in chapters, the experience of "every man's" social work job and the thinking of individuals.

The experience suggests that there is an evolving, self-determining program of collective thinking which will gather force commensurate with increased participation.

## PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

Presented by Lea D. Taylor, Chairman Report Committee

THE Report Committee of the Conference of the American Association of Social Workers was given a charter, first, to appraise the state of mind of the conferees; second, to express what is the common opinion on matters of common interest; third, to reflect the trend of discussion. The Committee starts, in its attempt to review the meeting of this conference, with the premise that the same object may show different outlines from different angles. This summary, therefore, is presented as the best analysis that the Committee could make of the "state of mind" of the conference and hopes that the members of the conference will recognize the difficulties of the pressure of time and subject matter.

Although we have gathered here from coast-to-coast and are representative of many different fields of social work which focus our attention on different parts of the social structure of today, we, nevertheless find ourselves in basic agreement on many of the changing philosophies and practices of this social order which has been shifting so bewilderingly before our eyes. Our discussion has ranged from the field of underlying philosophies of the function of government to the detail of personnel practices in social work. If this summary, therefore, seems disjointed, it is because we are simply reporting on the discussion, endeavoring to emphasize those points to which we seem to be in agreement, those upon which we have divided opinions, and those which call for further study. It would be impossible to review the trend of discussion in detail and we will have to leave to a fuller report some of the opinions which were vigorously expressed.

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Some of the discussion shows that we are reinforcing conclusions which we expressed last year. Other parts of the discussion show the shift in emphasis, occasioned by the developments of the past year. Although we recognize divisions of opinion and method, we nevertheless feel that there is more basic agreement than last year on the ultimate goal of social justice toward which we may be working along different lines.

Some of the conference feel that the road to this goal is not clear and straight and must be taken step by step choosing at each of the crossroads the path which seems to lead to that goal and helping to remove obstacles and clear the path for others to follow. They feel that a surer foundation is thus laid on which the whole group can build.

Others are convinced, through a basic awareness of certain assumptions and interpretations, that there is a clear road to our common goal which must be taken, however, by stages. They feel that only by radical changes in philosophy and in method can we ever reach the point toward which we are striving.

The acceptance of the principle of governmental responsibility for economic security was a basic agreement of the Conference. Some of those present regarded as a great social advance the acceptance by the present federal administration of this principle as evidenced in such measures as the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933, the development of a great public employment program, and the proposed Economic

Security Act. Some believed that there is ground for deep disappointment in the present proposals and program of the administration which these social workers regard as alarmingly inadequate to meet the present vital needs of the unemployed.

Some of the first group regard the measures for economic security as a minimum program, and others as much less than a minimum first step in the discharge of federal responsibility in a program of economic security. Many believed that the measures referred to are inadequate in scope, in the degree of federal participation, in the direction which some individual provisions take and in their failure to provide a unified and permanent federal public welfare authority for the administration of public assistance provisions.

In the discussion of the insurance provisions of proposed bills before Congress, no agreement was reached as to the sense of the meeting. Three points of view were presented on the administration measure:

The first group approves the administration measure as a real step forward in the acceptance of federal responsibility;

The second group feels that the problem should be divided into its ultimate and immediate issues and that recognizing the limits of the administration bill as to ultimate goals, there are parts of the proposed measure which could be endorsed and parts which could be amended; specifically, they feel the necessity of the broadening of the financial base by adding a government subsidy which would give more adequate protection to the worker and by setting up minimum state standards;

The third group feels that this approach to the problem is fundamentally unsound in its support and in its coverage and other items, and that any endorsement of it would represent a step backward in the attempt to get adequate unemployment coverage.

The Committee recommends further study upon the part of the Association of the subject of the national income, its sources and distribution, particularly in relation to taxation as a means of distribution, and in relation to the future effect of borrowing to finance present emergency measures.

#### WORK, ASSISTANCE AND PUBLIC WELFARE

The discussion of specific procedures brought out a number of points on which the Conference seemed to be in substantial agreement:

There was agreement that the federal government should provide a public works and service program distinct from work relief, which shall be based upon these principles:

1. Open opportunity to any individuals in need of work, regardless of whether or not they are at present in receipt of relief.
2. Such work to be in no way compulsory, nor an alternative to relief.
3. Rate of compensation not less than the prevailing wage.
4. The work to be useful and constructive, and have satisfactory work conditions.
5. Effort to be made to suit the individual to the job through the utilization of public employment offices.
6. Public works and service to include opportunities for cultural leadership, including the arts, educational activities, recreation, and other forms of service.

There seemed to be unanimous feeling that work relief is distinctly a form of relief, but is not a substitute for public work or for some forms of direct assistance. Feeling was expressed that work relief to be of any value should measure up to some of the standards of public works, and should be adapted to regional needs, and that it should be carefully worked out as one of the principles of case work.

In the discussion of the relationship between the federal government, the states, and local communities, there was agreement upon the need of creating a permanent consolidated public welfare authority with flexible departmental functions.

Since it is probable that under the present administrative plans, there may be as many as 50% of the unemployed who may not be absorbed in the projected works program, the creation of this federal administration on a permanent basis is imperative.

There was agreement that the federal allocations to states for family assistance would have to be continued.

Since the plan of the government includes allocations to meet special needs of dependent children, the crippled, the aged, and other groups, the Conference discussed the whole question of the relationship of categories of service to the whole problem of public assistance. There was agreement that the arguments against crystallizing the present categories in a long time federal program are cogent, and that primary human needs should be met on an individual and not on a class basis. The Conference agreed that categories were not based on true social differentiations, but on characteristics, which can legally be easily defined. Waiting lists, lack of appropriations, leave large numbers always uncared for, although the public assumes that this group at least is taken care of. Many difficulties arise which are confusing to the community and the family.

The Conference agreed upon the necessity of safeguarding and guaranteeing the contribution and objective of specialized fields in any shift to a public assistance authority.

There was a feeling that there should be no immediate abolition of categories which have served a useful purpose, and a recommendation that those who draft a bill for a public assistance authority endeavor to conserve the values of our past experience with special groups and leave room for development and integration of special services and functions within the welfare area. The general feeling seemed to be that assistance to the family as such should be carefully planned as has been assistance to specialized groups within the community.

The Conference was in agreement that the principle of grants-in-aid was a sound governmental procedure, and should be continued and extended.

It was agreed that the Association and its chapters assist in all possible ways in the improvement of the organization of public welfare which would include work toward establishment of a National Public Welfare Administration on a permanent basis and effective state departments of public welfare with county units. Such a federal agency should make available expert advisory information in regard to progressive public welfare procedure.

The Conference reiterated its opinion of last year that the state poor laws need rewriting in the light of modern methods of public assistance, and with a recognition of the duty of the community to plan for the social needs of its members. This led to a discussion of ways in which local communities and local political bodies may be brought to a realization of the fundamental principles underlying such planning.

There was general agreement that the federal transient program had proven its effectiveness, and that federal funds should be granted earmarked for that service.

Occupational placement is a specialized job which should be performed by specialists in that field, and the Conference favored placement through a unified nation-wide employment service as exemplified by the U. S. employment service at the present time, but extended so as to apply to all states and localities, and all placement on the government works program should be through the U. S. employment service.

The re-employment service, if it were allowed to develop facilities for private employment in states in which there is no adequate U. S. employment service, might be a desirable way of building

up the needed employment service. This is a better way to get people who are on relief or on work relief into employment in private industry than to drive them back by low work relief wages.

#### HOUSING

It was agreed that a permanent housing bureau or authority should be established in the federal government to promote and construct low rent housing and to operate through state and local housing boards and authorities.

It was agreed that slums and decadent areas are becoming increasingly, economic as well as social liabilities to the community of which they are a part. Private enterprise has no plan or program for the economic or social redevelopment of these areas. Their transformation is a legitimate public function and a proper part of a public works program. Government must accept responsibilities for turning them into community assets and for providing, on reclaimed sites or elsewhere, good housing for their present occupants. In this work, state and local governments must take part.

It was stated that social workers' tacit acceptance of bad housing conditions has been a serious handicap to development of public opinion sufficiently insistent to secure constructive action and has been used as an excuse for non-enforcement of standards required by law. Social workers were urged, in season and out, to say and repeat that no social work program can be successful so long as people are improperly and inadequately housed.

#### HEALTH

In the consideration of health services, the Conference agreed with the outline of health program procedure as given by Dr. Michael Davis.

1. The public provision of health services to those in need of such service.

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2. The extension of public medical service to rural areas.
3. The need of adequate medical care for people accustomed to payments for such service, which will be consistent with the self-respect of American citizens.

The Report Committee recommended for continued study the subject of health insurance.

#### PERSONNEL STANDARDS

It was agreed that the quality of program and policies of social work are determined by the maintenance of standards of qualified personnel; that the AASW has responsibility for influencing maintenance of standards in the field; and that the present AASW membership requirements are basic to the maintenance of standards. The group, therefore, favored:

1. A recommendation that the Administration's Security Bill, with reference to public assistance services, should include a provision for the selection of personnel on the basis of a merit system.
2. The promotion of a merit system in civil service as a proper major activity in the program of the AASW.
3. Referral to chapters of the question of some type of formal affiliation between AASW membership and certain provisionally qualified persons in the field as in the Proposed Index for Provisional Social Workers.

Existing experiments point to the need for setting up and conducting examinations and prerequisites for these examinations on the basis of changing concepts as to professional education in the midst of changing economic structure.

#### EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The economic conditions that accelerated the rapid development of social work have also produced many problems of employment practices. These practices have to be viewed in terms of the standards of personnel as they relate to scales of salaries, hiring and firing, sick leave and professional advancement. Such standards require factual data and regular information on employment practices in social work. There is further need for developing a consensus of thinking and action on proper procedure for dealing with violations of accepted standards of employment practices.

It is the sense of this meeting that the concern of the AASW is that employment and discharge of all workers in the field of social work should be based upon competency and efficient service; that this concern applies irrespective of membership in the Association, and without dis-

crimination as to race, color, or religious or political belief.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Committee that the minutes of the meeting and the detailed minutes of the discussion which bring out the trend of thought and points of difference should be referred to Committees of the Association for interpretation and study in the year ahead.

\* \* \*

#### *Utilization of Report Material*

The Preliminary Report was accepted by the delegates at the last session of the Conference as a fair appraisal of the trend of its discussion and of the different points of view expressed, with due recognition of the difficulties of preparing such a report while the Conference was in session. The Report has been for some time in the hands of Conference participants to whom it was mailed 24 hours after its acceptance by the Conference.

Difficulties of another kind are met in preparing a full report after the Conference has adjourned. It will be recalled that this was not a program based on prepared papers or formal reports. It was strictly speaking a discussion program. Material basic to some understanding of the subject matter, sent to chapter chairmen and delegates in advance of the Conference, was in large part included in the January issue of *The Compass*. That material, together with a number of additional documents made up the content of the "red folder" laid before each delegate at the Conference.

A report consisting of 483 pages of stenotyped verbatim minutes of the six conference sessions is on file in the national office. As a source of reference its value to the Committee which drafted the Preliminary Report, to the staff and to national committees is obvious. As a record of points of view expressed and of arguments advanced in support of these points of view, the verbatim report is a significant and interesting document. So far, however, no inexpensive and practical means have been found for a comprehensive use of these minutes in a form that would make them accessible to the membership.

As is indicated by the correspondence which is included under the next heading, "The Conference Discussion Continues," agreement on any restatement or supplementary interpretation of the Preliminary Report which would still be representative of what the Conference agreed upon as its "state of mind," is obviously impossible.

By the very nature of discussion characterized

by inter-play of ideas, the verbatim record reveals the dovetailing process by which individuals helped to carry threads into the fabric of argument. Out of their context these threads of discussion fail to show this value. In toto the record is unwieldy for purposes of general distribution.

As a source of reference it will be made available to the appropriate national committees where it should, together with the Preliminary Report, provide a basis for further activities by chapters and Association committees growing out of the

discussion of the Conference. It is hoped that some illuminating samples of verbatim discussion can be given to the membership and that if Association finances permit, detailed reports on the discussion at several significant points can be made available.

Perhaps after reading this *Compass* chapters and individuals will be able to make practical suggestions as to other means that might be utilized to give to those who could not participate some picture of the Conference process.

## THE DISCUSSION CONTINUES

THE conflicting points of view in the Conference on measures for economic security are well illustrated by the following communications received from individuals since the Conference on the expression of these points of view in the Preliminary Report:

### Linton Swift

Mr. Swift, in a memorandum, suggested a restatement of paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Preliminary Report to indicate a distinction between the pronouncement of a principle, which may in itself be of great value, and the extent to which that principle is actually accepted and carried out in practice. Mr. Swift suggested the following rewording to show this distinction:

The acceptance of the principle of governmental responsibility for economic security was a basic agreement of the Conference. Some of those present regard the pronouncement of that principle by a federal administration as a basis for great social advance. Differences of opinion arise, however, as to the extent to which in practice the measures proposed by the present administration are effective instruments in carrying out this principle. As examples we have the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933, the proposal for a great public employment program, and the proposed Economic Security Act.

Some regard the latter two proposals as an effective point of departure for a minimum program, while others consider it much less than even a minimum first step. Still others are not only deeply disappointed in these proposals but regard them as alarmingly inadequate to meet the present vital needs of the unemployed, which should be approached on an entirely different basis. There is a wide feeling that these measures are inadequate in scope, in the degree of federal participation, in the direction which some individual provisions take, and in their failure

to provide a unified and permanent federal public welfare authority.

### Mary van Kleeck

Miss van Kleeck, in a statement commenting on Mr. Swift's memorandum, says:

Mr. Swift's draft of February 26 seems to me clearer than the corresponding section in the report of the Washington Conference. But his reference to the difference between theory and practice is based, I believe, on a misunderstanding of the attitude of those who objected to that point in the report of the Conference.

The basic difference is not between the statement of a principle and its adoption; but between a promise put forward as a substitute for action and a genuine intention to accept a principle and to take steps toward its fulfilment.

Some of us believe that the present economic crisis has placed the Roosevelt Administration in a position where, in the effort to maintain the status quo and to quiet discontent, promises are put forward to workers and to the unemployed which cannot be fulfilled by the actual program of legislation recommended by the Administration.

The promises put forward in the President's messages on economic security do not seem to us, therefore, to constitute genuine acceptance of a new principle of governmental responsibility; rather they appear to us to be the reaction of embarrassed political leaders. For social workers to endorse promises under these circumstances as a great forward step is to encourage the American public in a delusion. This results in loss of valuable time in bringing to bear upon the Administration the pressure which an aroused public opinion would stimulate.

Thus the Wagner-Lewis bill for unemployment insurance, old age pensions and the like seems to us to be an evasion of a promise, rather than the first expression of a principle. We are sure

that social workers wish to be practical in their recommendations, and we therefore oppose an endorsement which seems to us politically naive, postponing effective action and stimulating false hopes.

#### **Lea D. Taylor**

Miss Taylor, commenting on points in Miss van Kleeck's letter, says:

Miss van Kleeck refers in her letter to the unwillingness of some of the membership to have the American Association of Social Workers give its endorsement to the Administration. The Conference in Washington did not give formal endorsement to any program or measures. The plan of the Conference was to get expression of points of view, and the Report Committee attempted to the best of its ability to summarize the discussion when different points of view were expressed. It is inevitable that in so brief a summary those points of view may not be as clearly expressed as they would have been had each group upon mature reflection worded a statement. But in reporting the Conference the Committee made every effort to be fair to all points of view. Perhaps those "on the right" have more reason than any to feel that their point of view was not fully stated.

#### **Kenneth L. M. Pray**

Mr. Pray comments as follows on Mr. Swift's memorandum:

I am not quite satisfied with the changes proposed in Mr. Swift's memorandum. The second sentence as he proposes it fails to express what I think the conference, if given a chance, would definitely have stated, namely, that whether good

or bad, whether sincere or not, the federal administration's program was a recognition of the principle, and that its very presentation marked a definite social advance. I think there is great danger that the Association, by its unwillingness to indicate any confidence in the administration, will play into the hands of the reactionary group opposed to the principle of governmental responsibility.

We made a number of positive and constructive suggestions. I think we should stand on them, and it is possible that unless they are incorporated in the program, we should oppose its final enactment. This does not mean, however, that the principle of federal responsibility has not been furthered, and that we are not glad that in 1935 we have a chance to discuss federal action for social security as a possibility, indeed, a probably attainable objective in the near future—a result which two years ago would have been utterly inconceivable. I am perfectly certain that the conference as a whole had this view, and I think that the very faint and qualified expression of it in the original report is infinitely to be preferred to Mr. Swift's revision.

I think there is some danger of having our policy determined by the relative strength of pressures exerted by various groups—either a radical minority seeking immediate Utopias, or a complacent minority willing to accept almost anything labeled progress. I think the important thing is to find a rational basis of action on positive grounds, and without regard to particular group pressures, so that we can take a responsible and useful part in the constructive process of formulating a present practicable program, and at the same time may exert our influence toward a long term goal.

## **CONFERENCE PROCEDURE**

THE relatively smooth progress of the Conference through the deep waters of controversy and the rocks of parliamentary debate was due to the genius of the presiding officer, Dorothy Kahn, the professional "give and take" spirit of the participants, and the clear and simple rules of procedure developed by the Planning Committee of which Stanley P. Davies was Chairman. Serving with him on the Committee were: Helen Crosby, Arthur Dunham, Gladys Fisher, Jane Hoey, David Holbrook, Katharine Lenroot, and Dr. Ellen Potter.

Improvement upon the procedures of the 1934 Delegate Conference was important because the changes in the By-Laws adopted at the Association's Annual Meeting in Kansas City gave the Delegate Conference official status with

policy-making functions binding on the Association.

Members of the Association attending the Conference were divided by the Planning Committee into four classifications—delegates, alternates, national committee members and observers. The delegate group was composed of officially appointed chapter representatives and each chapter was permitted to appoint one alternate for every delegate. Privileges of the floor were given to the first three classifications but not to observers, and the application of this rule was facilitated by the seating arrangements which separated the observers from the participating members.

Rules of the Planning Committee governing voting privileges allowed for two different kinds

of votes—"sense of the meeting" vote and record vote. The first type of vote was designed to enable the Conference to express its opinion on matters under discussion without taking a vote which would be binding on the Association. Delegates, alternates and committee members voted whenever an "expression of opinion" vote was called for and these votes were referred to the Committee which was charged with the responsibility for bringing in a report of the Conference at the last session. Record votes were limited to authorized delegates or to alternates named by delegates to act in their absence.

The Conference found the "expression of opinion" vote most satisfactory for its deliberations and the record vote was used only at the business meeting. This procedure fitted in well with the Planning Committee's arrangements for interpreting and summarizing the discussions. Recognizing the drawbacks to the method followed at the 1934 Conference of attempting to crystallize the discussion in the form of resolutions and pronouncements, the Planning Committee gave a different name and a different assignment to the committee charged with this responsibility. The committee was called the Committee on Report of the Conference instead of Committee on Resolutions and it was instructed to bring

in a summary report setting forth the thinking of the Conference, including points of general agreement as well as points on which there was divided opinion. The Committee was also to be responsible for indicating the subject material coming out of the Conference which should be referred to chapters and Association Committees for further interpretation and study.

Lea D. Taylor was appointed Chairman of the Report Committee and the Committee members who served with her took the responsibility for summarizing the trends of discussion at each session, thus providing the foundation for the report which was submitted to the Conference at its last session. Members of the Committee who reported the sessions were Gertrude Springer, Margaret Johnson, Margaret Rich, Mrs. Anna B. Ware, Paul Benjamin, William Savin and Mrs. Elinor Hixenbaugh.

The Report Committee also cooperated with Louise Bache, who was in charge of press relations during the Conference. Through the courtesy of Community Chests and Councils, Inc., the services of Miss Bache were made available to the Association for the Conference and her skillful handling of publicity was of great assistance to the officers of the Association and the Planning Committee.

## THE CONFERENCE FROM VARIOUS ANGLES

### I. POST CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS AND APPRAISALS

NUMEROUS comments on the Conference have been received in the national office. Those from Grace Marcus and David Holbrook quoted below are illustrative of the constructive value in these comments. Excerpts from Gertrude Springer's appraisal of the Conference in the March Mid-Monthly Survey and from Marcel Kovarsky in the April issue of *Social Work Today* are also included.

#### *From Grace Marcus*

One of the most irritating stumbling blocks in social work has been the lack of opportunity for social workers to keep abreast of their own experience. In the daily scramble how much real chance is there to collect and match opinions, test old ideas and principles and find new orientations? In most "conferences," we are hedged about by agency restrictions, or limited by the disturbing sense of an audience, or compelled to "educate" and influence others to the neglect of our own private need to face the questions, doubts and conflicts which arise out of our very growth. The great achievement of this Delegate Conference was its utilization of an occasion for free and hon-

est discussion,—without self-consciousness, suppression of differences or a false urge to rush to weighty conclusions. The experience was used not as a challenge to see how many pronouncements social workers might make in three days but as a stimulus to straighter thinking and more effective action during the next three hundred and sixty-two.

What stirred me most was a new sense of the magnitude and complexity of the social work interests and problems that confront us. I say "new" because for the first time I came away from a conference with no feeling of oppression and futility. The chief defect of the Association is a lack, not of professional resources, but of money to further vital ends which cannot be served unless we furnish the means. These ends are not theoretical and remote. They do not concern some of the membership less than others. They are not likely to be met except through channels the Association as a professional organization provides. We need regional as well as national delegate meetings, we need funds to equip committees and promote studies, we need a journal for professional interchange. Are we to view the

support of the Association as a "tax" or as an interest individually and professionally important to us?

#### From David Holbrook

I know you like to get other people's ideas, so I am dictating below some more or less scattered comments and impressions I got at Washington. I hardly want to say the letter is confidential, but merely that it is being done pretty hastily.

I thought the Delegate Conference was a great improvement over last year's. Its recognized status in the Association probably helped, but the experience of 1934 seems to me to have proved even more influential. The best illustration of this is the report of the Conference. Instead of attempted finality, it gives one the sense of people thinking together on difficult and almost insoluble problems. The setting forth of their agreements, differences of opinion and approach, coupled with the suggestions for specific study, seem to me much more helpful. I anticipate the document will win favor where last year's report was criticized. Yet it contains even more advanced thinking.

Whoever had the inspiration to drop out any general theme for the Conference had a good hunch. I doubt if it was missed by anyone, and after all, the main idea was a meeting of the delegates themselves.

There was a great advantage, too, I thought, in the rather loose parliamentary procedure with its excellent buttresses in the form of simple rules to discourage precipitate action. Miss Kahn's able presiding was no small factor, however, in making it all work along smoothly. I could not help thinking at several points in the discussion how much more important it is for a group of individuals to discover and sense the full meaning of its own rules than it is to have the rules clapped down on them. It may seem to take a little longer, but it saves time in the end.

The requiring of two votes when the meeting is ready to crystallize its opinion is ingenious and I should think quite workable in the Association. Possibly it could be varied slightly by the chairman's only using it when the issues have been pretty closely drawn in the discussion. For example, wouldn't it have been cumbersome to have had this preliminary vote on whether they wished to vote before they passed Father O'Dwyer's motion on the transient, Moss's motion on civil service, Clague's motion on getting the merit system into the Wagner bill, Miss Vaile's motion for adequate funds for family assistance, and perhaps Gordon Hamilton's motion for a statement on categorical relief. Each of these motions was

passed with little further discussion and almost on common consent.

Would more pictures of regional, state and even city situations be worth planning for in the next program? The picture of Arkansas, and to a lesser degree of Maryland, made the preceding and succeeding discussions much more vivid. Possibly this idea could be used for an opening session at the time when you have to have background material. Folks have not gotten used to being together and anything put forward is something like the first cold plunge. I suppose the traditional address of welcome at many meetings helps serve this purpose. If, however, those brought together in a room in Washington could in imagination be carried swiftly out to sections of the country represented by the delegates, it might help some.

Taking everything into consideration, the opening session Friday morning seemed to me to serve a good purpose all around. Even with the disjointed presentation of viewpoints, in which some committee's difficulties were tied in with the Lundeen Bill, income statistics and Father O'Grady's anticipation of a heated debate, we did get some background. I doubt if the committee could have staged anything much more effectively. It tended, it seems to me, to confuse rather than to clarify the situation, but a formalized presentation of the same material might also have left something to be wanted. Personally I should like to have had Clague, Miss van Kleeck and Lurie called on to each talk for ten minutes on some such theme as "National Social Welfare Objectives for Social Workers," and then throw the meeting open for discussion.

I was struck by the contribution that Philadelphia people made to the thinking, especially on Friday afternoon. There was for a time a real educational atmosphere created when everyone was thinking creatively, if you may venture to interpret facial expressions and the general atmosphere of the room. To be specific, Mr. Rogers from Rochester began, it seemed to me, a discussion of the merit of work itself by his discussion about young people. Although interspersed by remarks on legislative aspects, this thread of thought was carried along. Miss Libbey called attention to our being "in a period of social and psychological cultural changes as well as economic changes." Her suggestion that we need to evaluate how we move from one culture to another was the high point of the whole conference for me.

Miss Childrey talked further on "other creative things besides work"; Rabinoff raised the point negatively by speaking of the discussion as being

outside the area for social work (a point greatly needing thoughtful discussion); Swift gave his philosophy of work as something that is good for you, if you like it—also brought out CWA values by personal illustration; and best of all, called for Dorothy Kahn.

Miss Kahn's analysis of work and her pointing out the need for separating it into concepts of creative activity and earning a living brought a real clarification into everyone's thinking.

Probably we could not have gone on much longer, but anyhow Mr. Conant's motion brought the educational situation to an abrupt end. At the time I grudged the time we spent on motions and amendments, but looking back at it I guess it was all for the best.

This particular line of discussion impressed me as being exceedingly valuable for the AASW to think about. If it aims to be a professional organization that includes social work that is not merely economic in character, it needs to feed on this sort of thinking. After all, the Conference, like the country itself nowadays, did very little thinking outside the economic field. That is a bit of an overstatement for there was a good deal scattered along through the discussion. But the whole approach tended to be economic, and in the main we discussed relief in some of its aspects most of the time.

This reminds me that I found Miss Abbott's pounding on the idea of breaking up the poor law a very suggestive one. Isn't there something in the way of a slogan there that the Association can emphasize? And is it only poor laws that we want to break up? Why should recreation, nursery schools and all the rest be tied to relief? Despite our reaction against the President's dictum, "This relief business must go," we need to think about some of the underlying implications even while we fight to prevent people from being forgotten. Folks need lots of things as well as work—education, recreation, etc. But how much of this is social work's responsibility and how much someone's else?

Well, I am a long ways off my course where I started to illustrate why I thought Philadelphia made a contribution. Pray, Libbey, Childrey, Kahn and Clague seemed to talk as though they were thinking along together on these subjects. Aren't they a bit ahead of other cities in this respect? I don't mean, of course, that they always agree in viewpoint.

I hope, in connection with various subjects, we will continue to get the kind of professional history and analysis that Dr. Potter brought us in connection with licensing and certification. One was impressed by the infancy of social work and

the need for close cooperation with older professional groups. All this is said many times theoretically but when it comes as a by-product of a report on a specific subject it carries much greater weight. I thought Miss van Kleeck's bringing in employment practices elsewhere had this same quality.

During the four sessions on Friday and Saturday, not including the business session in the evening, there were 61 people who took a fairly active part in the discussion. On Friday morning 12 people spoke seventeen times. Miss Sytz, Miss Vaile, Kahn of Georgia and Pfeiffer were the only ones outside of New York and Philadelphia. Friday afternoon 25 people took part including 8 of those who spoke in the morning. Saturday morning 28 people participated, including 9 who had gotten into the discussion the preceding day. Saturday afternoon 30 took part, including 10 who had spoken at previous sessions. These figures seem to indicate how the discussion widened as the time went on.

*Excerpts from Gertrude Springer, March Mid-Monthly Survey*

"This is yeast." The social worker from Arkansas, a little grey around the edges, had driven 1200 miles to attend the mid-winter delegate conference of the American Association of Social Workers in Washington. For three days she listened to discussion that swirled back and forth, in and out, over and under the contemporary social scene. With some of it she disagreed profoundly, with much of it she agreed only in part; some of it her emotion accepted and some of it her realistic experience rejected. But in all of it she felt a breaking down of the old complacencies of her calling, and a stretching of its horizons; felt herself pulled out of old ruts and roused by new challenges—and she liked it. "This is yeast," she said. "This is growth." . . .

At the end of it all there emerged, within the framework of disagreement, a substantial group opinion on matters of common concern in the form of a report shaped as a review of the Conference and a reflection of its trend of thinking. This was adopted with only enough dissent to keep the dissenters' record clear. That this meeting which might conceivably have split the Association ended on a note of unanimity was a measure of the intellectual poise of its participants and of the personal quality of its officials; Dorothy C. Kahn of Philadelphia who presided with warm humor and unassailable fairness; Stanley P. Davies of New York, chairman of the Planning Committee who kept the program on schedule and prevented one topic from running away with the

time of another; Walter West, executive secretary, and his staff, who gave the conference a green baize setting worthy of Geneva and who kept all the wheels turning, and Lea Taylor of Chicago, chairman of the Report Committee who drew into a pattern the multi-colored strands of opinion and discussion. . . .

Old timers, conditioned in the tradition of taking what you can get in social legislation and moving on from there, found themselves confused before the new impatience with this strategy, with the unwillingness to take anything on faith or to accept any step without a clear delineation of the goal. But they had no quarrel with Kenneth L. Pray of Philadelphia when he summed up:

We are not any of us satisfied with the Administration's program for security and public welfare. We are far from satisfied with the insurance features; we are dissatisfied, decidedly dissatisfied, highly critical, of the work provisions; we are gravely concerned about the relief features and we are perhaps most of all troubled by the lack of cohesion and symmetry in the whole program.

The discussion of federal, state and local cooperation in a nation-wide relief program got off to a good start under the salty leadership of Edith Abbott, but this too soon shook down into a keen interchange over categorical relief as against a broad base of public assistance. . . .

What, then, out of all this tangle of forthright expression were the threads of agreement which came clear? First of all that it is not enough to enunciate the principle of governmental responsibility for economic security; theory must be followed by action which clearly envisages and states the goal. And here, of course, the paths divided. The one to the right held the administration program as a real step forward in the acceptance of federal responsibility; the one to the left held the program fundamentally unsound and a step backward; the one in the center held that while the ultimate goals of the program are limited, parts of it are acceptable and other parts may be made so by amendments which would broaden the financial base and establish minimum standards of coverage. . . .

Curiously enough these social workers while cold to anything the New Deal has done to date, disillusioned about the "flying trapeze act" of the relief performance, gravely doubtful of the efficacy of the new work program, sceptical of the social security program, were not as negative as this sounds. They were, indeed, willing to entrust the federal government with a good many pretty important matters. For instance, they agreed on the necessity of a permanent fed-

eral public welfare administration, and of a permanent federal housing authority to promote and construct low-rent housing through state and local boards and authorities. . . .

The conference of 1935 had on the whole a more modest mien than that of 1934. Its discussions, wide ranging though they were, kept pretty well within the areas of professional competency. . . . There were among the delegates those who chafed because the conference didn't "come out" for something; there were others who grew impatient with extended discussions of proposals the philosophy of which they felt to be "contrary to our going system of government"; there were more who saw in the free and forthright discussion and in the capacity of social workers to sit around green baize and face their differences the soundest possible auguries for a vital and vigorous development of the profession in whatever social framework it may function.

#### *Excerpts from Marcel Kovarsky, Social Work Today, for April*

**Work Relief.** In the afternoon we are to consider the Works Bill. Kenneth Pray, who as chairman, outlines the Administration program. It sets up three lines of defense: insurance, public works and relief. None of us is completely satisfied with this scheme. He suggests we consider the value of work in a relief program.

There is brisk discussion. The conference has warmed up by this time and many delegates take the floor. No one accepts the FERA's estimate that 80 per cent of the families on relief contain employable members. Doubt is expressed whether suitable projects can be developed for women, professional workers, youth. Some delegates refer to the moral value of work relief; others are frankly skeptical. The sentiment is that if we can't have a works program on a decent wage basis it is better to have none at all.

Several chapters have formal reports to present. Cincinnati points out that the Works Bill is full of loopholes and that "security payments" of \$50 a month are insufficient. St. Louis set out to determine the criteria of an adequate welfare program. They came to the conclusion that it must be federal in scope and administration, cover the needs of all unemployed, be financed from the profits of business and administered without a means test. It sounds like the Lundeen Bill. We are discussing security again. . . .

There is more talk about work relief. Nobody seems to like it. Lurie points out that there are already 2 million at work on FERA projects, 400,000 on PWA and as many in CCC. Three

and one-half million jobs no longer loom so big. . . .

*Security again.* Sunday morning's discussion on security is more concrete. It has to be, the conference has little time left. Miss van Kleeck outlines the economic background for relief and insurance. The need for social insurance is not new. Since 1790 we have had 32 panics—one year of depression for every year and a half of prosperity. For every year and a half that we produce goods we spend one year producing poverty. The problem cannot be approached on a relief basis. It can only be met by a program of social insurance which is financed by general taxation. Any actuarial scheme boils down to a redistribution of poverty. The Wagner-Lewis Bill provides for smaller contributions than last year and sets no minimum standards. Far from providing any real security, its passage would tend to block the achievement of genuine insurance. . . .

The discussion digresses somewhat until Lurie brings it back to a consideration of how little coverage the Administration plan really affords. Burke of St. Louis suggests that we distinguish between ultimate and immediate objectives in this matter. That sets the tone; delegate after delegate rises to voice endorsement of the Lun-

deen Bill in principle, only to add that the Administration measure should be backed for practical reasons.

*Employment Practices.* A group remains to discuss employment practices. Chapters all over the country are being asked to act on cases of discrimination and discharge. Can we lay down any principles to guide them? We agree on several. The Association's interest in employment practices is not to be limited to its own membership but is to include all persons in social work. Employment and discharge should be based on merit, without reference to race, color, political or religious belief. The conclusions are rushed up to the Committee on Report which is meeting at luncheon. . . .

*Retrospect.* What was accomplished? Administration measures which were admittedly inadequate were not endorsed. That's something, but is it enough? Don't we need a positive program? Ought we not at least to have articulated the principles of adequate social insurance? Have we nothing to say on the subject of rent policy, the use of police, discharge of workers for organizational activity?

Some one remarks that the rank and file is meeting in Pittsburgh next week-end. They may have some of the answers.

## II. SOME SESSIONS AS INTERPRETED BY SESSION REPORTERS

(Members of the Report Committee who prepared the following summaries of discussion included Margaret Rich, Mrs. Anna Budd Ware, Paul Benjamin, William Savin, and Mrs. Elinor R. Hixenbaugh. The session reporters had to prepare their summaries between sessions without opportunity for revision or reflection.)

### *Friday Afternoon. The Administration's Program for Security and Public Welfare*

As outlined in the chairman's speech the topics for the afternoon session included the three major provisions of the President's Security Program—social insurance, work relief and categorical relief—but the discussion was almost entirely centered on work relief and its alternatives in the way of a public works program or direct relief—or, more accurately, on some combination of these two alternatives. There seemed implicit in much of the discussion a feeling that at one and the same time the President's program closed its eyes to the need of direct relief to the unemployed, yet in its provisions for work relief was actually giving relief without admitting it.

*Work Versus Relief:* Do we believe that work is always preferable to relief? Only one person felt that work was always preferable to relief in that (1) it enables a worker to retain his skills (2) it gives the worker status in his

relations with his fellows (3) it benefits him physically. Other expressions qualified the advantages of work, even as a morale builder, as dependent on wages, conditions of work, suitability of work to workers' skills and equipment, and whether work was compulsory or permissive—you may work, in the sense of here is an opportunity for creative activity, is quite different from you must work or we won't support you. It was suggested that we are in transition to a new culture in which work for its own sake will seem less important in our philosophy of life and there will be greater stress on the development of opportunities for creative expression whether through work for wages or through activities that have no money return.

*Public Works Program Versus Work Relief:* From the point of view of a work program there were many doubts expressed as to the practicability of the provisions in the present program. Is it possible to develop work projects of sufficient variety to give jobs to the 3½ millions who are

supposed to be provided for? Will there be enough persons among the unemployed who are on relief to fill all the skilled jobs including supervisory positions in the projects as at present suggested? There would seem to be considerable shortsightedness in the insistence that workers should be chosen from relief rolls only. The experience in Philadelphia indicates that not more than 50% of those on relief rolls can be absorbed in work projects. Actually, benefit in the way of increased general employment redounds to the unemployed on relief by the employment of the unemployed not on relief which suggests that restrictions as to people to be given work are inconsistent with desired objectives. A public works program would not have this particular disadvantage.

It was felt that work relief at less than prevailing wage because of its implication that the individual is working for relief would tend to lower general wage scales, again defeating its very purpose. The emphasis on the relief angle of the works program may have serious consequences in hardship on those unemployed who need work but are reluctant to apply for relief in order to get a job, and equally disastrous in encouraging applications for relief from those whose only need is work.

*Financing of Works Relief Program:* It was felt that taxation rather than borrowing should be the basis for financing the projected program and that the appropriations specified would be insufficient to carry on the projects on anything like the adequacy expected.

*Need for a Direct Relief Program:* If the work relief program can absorb no more than 50% of the unemployed now on relief rolls, there must obviously be some other provision for their subsistence. Direct relief from federal sources would seem to be the answer. In addition to the group who could not be taken on work projects there are obviously other needs for relief which may arise in the families of those who are working on relief work—temporary illness or layoff, gap between employment on one project and transfer to another, the inequalities in size of families that will be expected to live on same wage. Experience has also shown that even with adequate social insurance relief is still needed for beneficiaries because of essential limitations in any insurance provisions—both on time and amount.

The general trends of the discussion indicated agreement on the following points:

1. The work program should be set up apart from the relief program as an instrumentality for reducing unemployment and a full relief program should be maintained.
2. A general public works program would be

preferable to the work relief proposal. Such a public works program would include:

- a. Work opportunities for unemployed persons qualified on basis of skill and equipment rather than of need for relief.
- b. Wages not lower than prevailing wage scales.
- c. Projects of sufficient variety to offer opportunities to all groups of the unemployed. Particular attention should be given to the development of opportunities for cultural activities, including the arts, educational activities, and so on.

#### *Saturday Morning. State, Federal and Local Cooperation in a Nation-wide Relief Program*

The session began with two definitely posed questions by Miss Edith Abbott. She urged the principles of federal grants-in-aid in public welfare and the equalization of such grants on some basis that would be fair to all the states. The concern of the delegates with principles of larger scope carried the meeting away from these concrete proposals to questions of categories of aid, need for continuing federal leadership in welfare, the problem of the "forgotten family," the inadequacy of poor laws and other questions.

The thinking crystallized around the need for coordination and further improvement of welfare services which it was felt can best be gained by the establishment by the federal government of standards which in turn must be required by competent state departments of responsible county welfare organizations. Public welfare services should provide adequacy of the system, should have competent and sufficient personnel, and should be flexible. It should also offer completeness of service. The recognition by the federal government for the first time of the imperative necessity for social security for its citizens is an advance of tremendous significance.

There was general agreement that categorical relief had served its usefulness. In its inception it was an improvement over the shameless poor laws. The widow and her children were set apart in order that they might not have this stigma which attached to relief. It was felt that categorical relief should now give way to a coordinated system in which all individuals would be given individualized treatment regardless of the special classes into which it might be possible to group them.

There was also agreement that it would be a colossal mistake to turn relief back to the states and localities without federal leadership and federal standards. It was pointed out that such safeguards are needed. Otherwise the assistance

of disadvantaged citizens will go back to local groups which lack money, personnel and a social philosophy.

Opinions were expressed that the "forgotten family" may not fall into any category and may, therefore, be neglected. Their condition may not seem as dramatic as that of the widowed, the blind or the aged. We should think of people as people and not as groups. Individualized care and adequacy of aid should apply to all persons being helped regardless of the special class to which they might belong.

The transient program of the federal government has represented a decided gain in dealing with such persons, in the opinion of the delegates.

The poor laws of many states came in for severe condemnation. "We don't believe in stabilizing destitution." Arthur Dunham expressed the consensus of opinion in suggesting the rewriting of poor laws and the development of comprehensive flexible systems of public assistance in which the recognition of the existence of variations in human need shall be the basis.

There was also the belief that local communities had been too much ignored in the formulation of state and federal programs and that some instrument should be forged to provide them an opportunity to afford appropriate services to meet local situations.

The reorientation of thinking necessary to bring about these changes can only be accomplished after much educational work. That the folkways usually prevail is true of attitudes toward public welfare; consequently social workers should address themselves to the larger task of interpretation.

The delegates took action as follows:

1. That a committee of the conference should be appointed to draft a statement regarding categorical relief.
2. That the federal transient service should be continued with funds ear-marked for it.
3. That a permanent federal welfare authority should be established by the federal government, and that the proper committee of the AASW should be asked to draft appropriate legislation necessary to implement this action. Related questions such as whether or not the director of the authority should be a Cabinet officer were referred to this committee.
4. That there should be an adequate appropriation of federal funds for family assistance.

#### *Saturday Afternoon. Professional Personnel and Employment Practices*

The maintenance of professional standards in

social work is of vital concern to the AASW. These standards relate to the basic qualifications of professional personnel and the requirements as to education, training and professional affiliation. The very nature of professional association implies a process of selectiveness in membership.

Recent developments in the field of public welfare services bring to the front the problems of the extension of the civil service merit system; have raised the question of the basis of recognition of the social work profession by the public through a system of certification and registration; and have made the promotion of sound employment practices in social work a matter of immediate practical concern to those now employed who are interested in favorable working conditions conducive to high standards of professional service.

With reference to a qualified professional personnel in social work, the AASW has a definite obligation to maintain leadership and exercise an influence in the shaping of professional qualifications that will hold the profession together. Policies of isolation and division are not to the best interests of the Association.

Although there was recognition that a single professional standard is highly desirable, there was division of opinion as to the value of setting up a minimum pre-professional standard to be administered by the AASW through the creation of a proposed index of provisional social workers. Many chapters were opposed to such listing as an unsatisfactory method of accelerating professional training or meeting membership qualifications. Others felt that not sufficient time had been given to a consideration of such proposed index as to make immediate decision and action desirable.

The consensus of the delegates was expressed in an affirmative vote to refer the entire subject of the setting up of an index of provisional social workers back to the chapters for further consideration and action.

The rapid development of welfare services under governmental authority make the extension of the merit system in civil service a matter of immediate practical concern to the AASW.

It was pointed out that the proper spirit of approach, a sound technique, and a desirable method of procedure were essential to the functioning and administration of a merit system in civil service.

Chapters of the AASW have a definite responsibility in assisting governmental agencies in their efforts to apply the merit system, in improving the type of examinations given, and in recruiting qualified people to apply for social work positions.

Where there is no legal system of civil service in operation or where the law has broken down in its application, chapters and AASW members might take the initiative in helping to set up a voluntary system of civil service that will aid in the selection of professional personnel.

There is need for exploring further the possibilities of inter-professional action and cooperation in the enactment of the right kind of civil service laws and in maintaining the merit system in actual practice.

The importance of this subject was the basis for affirmative action recording the sense of the meeting that the national office make civil service as applicable to social work positions a major activity of the Association.

In furtherance of its strong belief in the merit system, the AASW urges the incorporation of the merit clause in the provisions of the Security Bill governing public assistance services as well as in the provisions for unemployment insurance where it is already incorporated.

The subject of the certification and registration of professional social workers has been receiving attention and study in various parts of the country. It is directly concerned with setting up professional standards. Professional status by means of certification and registration pre-supposes agreement on the requirements of a basic education, the requisites of technical training, the setting up of machinery and the public recognition of the professional practitioner by title.

The distinction under legal registration systems between the right to a particular title and the right to practice were clarified. Legal recognition was distinguished from recognition under a voluntary system of experimentation.

The professions of law and medicine reached their present legal status as the result of a slow process of development. Social work has undergone a much more rapid development. Economic

conditions are largely responsible for this. The problem of basic minimum training, the relationship between professional practice and schools of training, what constitutes an accredited agency are problems in the process of solution. These need to be solved before social work will be ready for a legal system of licensing.

The efforts of some states in setting up voluntary systems of certification and registration are commendable as this means that the process would be developed on an experimental basis and would allow for an appraisal of values.

The economic conditions that have accelerated the rapid development of social work have also produced many problems in employment practices. These practices have to be viewed in terms of the standards of personnel as they relate to scales of salaries, tenure of office, sick leave, workmen's compensation, and professional advancement.

Good employment practices are of concern to social workers in their daily tasks and in their functions in social agencies.

The AASW is interested in employment practices because they affect the quality of the social services, and because social work is vitally concerned with problems of living and working standards.

However, there is need for factual data and routine information on employment practices in social work. There is also need for developing a consensus of thinking and action on proper procedure for dealing with violations of fair and accepted standards of employment practices.

How the emerging status of our profession may be conserved and at the same time allow for progressive growth and development, and how the AASW, as a professional association, may function collectively, expressing the united point of view of the profession on matters of professional concern and competence, are areas of definite interest to the Association requiring further exploration.

### III. SCANNING THE RECORD FOR FREE DISCUSSION

(The following is arbitrarily culled from the the stenotyped report of the Conference in scanning the first pages for evidence of free discussion. It does not attempt to deal with the subject matter under discussion.)

Getting under way in the first session, the discussion leader focussed attention on the Security Program and the directions which the Committees of the Division on Government and Social Work had taken in "an attempt to secure a more unified and a more adequate federal public welfare program with a unified state program and a unified county and community program."

The chairman of one of the committees char-

acterized security programs as the "maximum program . . . as illustrated by the Lundeen Bill" and the "minimum program which one might think of as a developmental program based upon what we have now." "None of us on the Committee," he said, "is as far right, I believe, or as center as the Administration. We are all to the left of the Administration (laughter) . . . Now as to the questions that have been asked con-

cerning the maximum approach, the most important question has been, is it in accordance with our prevailing system, can we support a measure which so radically departs from all our present philosophy concerning the poor and concerning labor? Well, it seems to me that social workers who recognize the problems that are involved can do no less than depart from a philosophy which has been so unsatisfactory and so undesirable in the past. We do not believe, those of us who favor the maximum program, that it really means a radical change of our organized economic structure."

"I suppose," was volunteered from the floor, "before we get through this will be rather a heated debate, at least I assume so. Now it seems to me that there is much to be said for and against this so-called minimum approach. It is a pragmatic approach to the present situation. It assumes that this capitalistic machine is not in very good order just now and that we need to deal with it rather carefully or otherwise discard it. . . . I am just as strongly as any one in favor of a high standard of life, but I am not sure that I am willing to give up the capitalistic system in order to go over to a complete system of state socialism or communism."

Included in a reply from the floor came: "If it is not possible to have it under a system of capitalism, then the maintenance of the present system becomes a secondary consideration . . . it is only by asking for that and putting forth immediate demands and trying to see what can be gotten under capitalism that ultimately we get anywhere."

A question of economics was raised: "Until you can prove that it will work itself out in production as such, I can't think that you can assure yourself that the Lundeen Bill will economically work under the present system. . . . The length of time can't be indefinite. In any insurance provision you must change to a new status. Lastly you can't have compensation equal to wages."

Another referred to a previous speaker who, he said, "stated that the proponents of the Lundeen Bill really had a name for it which they would not tell us about. That has been settled by someone else telling us just what the name for it is, and so now that that's out in the open I think none of us will get the jitters if it is repeated. . . . I do not believe that in all honesty, we should drag a red herring and call it the Lundeen Bill, when what we really want is something far worthier—a socialized system in place of a competitive, profit-motivated system under which we are trying to labor and give some people relief."

Objections were made to earlier points on the economics of the Lundeen Bill. Then: "We have

to face a situation which after five years of serious unemployment can only be interpreted by the social workers by saying that you cannot trust the present Administration to carry forward consistently any social welfare program, that it is subject month by month to tremendous forces of reaction which are getting under way at this moment. . . ."

The question was asked, "Why should anyone work if he can make just as much money by being unemployed as by working?" And one reply was: "Primarily people prefer to work because work is creative and has certain satisfactions, and if they do not prefer to work, there are always methods of control . . . and where the social worker will fail I am sure that these labor committees made up of people who earn their daily bread are going to be more successful."

Rapid cross discussion as to difficulty in determining amount of compensation in the case of higher salaried positions was focussed on "the average wage of the locality" phrase in the Lundeen Bill. It was pointed out that this would lead to an impossible economic situation similar to the present relief situation where relief for many is larger than their former earnings but that in the case of the Lundeen Bill this would go on indefinitely. A southern delegate raised the problem of subsidizing under-employment according to this bill by pointing out its wording: "workers able to secure only part time employment shall be entitled to receive the difference between their earnings and the average local wages for full time employment." That being similar to the problem of the present administration of federal relief and carried over in this bill, she asserted it seems "far more basic to do something about the people habitually unemployed and in casual work . . . I don't know the answer but we have to get the problem out and this doesn't do it."

Another southern delegate referred to the below subsistence levels of wages in some southern states. Someone pointed to the \$10 weekly minimum clause. By the first speaker this was labelled a disregard for prevailing wages. A further speaker felt the clause would, in operation, raise local wages. The willingness of employers to raise wages was questioned. The principal of the NRA codes was pointed out in response.

The leader of the session characterized this type of discussion as possible "because actually our hearts are in just about the same place and it is a question of whether our minds can all get there at the same time. We are going through the very interesting process of trying to secure something of a meeting of minds, and that is a slow and difficult process."

A western delegate renewed a point: ". . .

CWA wages . . . in the locality in which they were higher, merely stopped what natural industrial work was available. . . . If instead of setting a flat rate, we could come back to a minimum wage with a commission set up and steadily study. . . .

A clause in the Lundein Bill was pointed out as providing virtually this in response to which the question was asked: "Why the flat rate to start with?" This, it was said, was "in order to indicate that it is not merely a relief measure . . ."

An eastern delegate referred to difference of opinion between two delegates who had spoken on the adequacy of national income: "It seems to me that those of us who are asked to form our opinion have got to suspend our judgment in making up our minds until a question which so modifies our judgment as to the available source of funds under the social system has in some way been determined. . . . I am wondering if we are to have sufficient time for consideration of material. . . ."

There was a suggestion for an evening meeting to consider certain figures on national income.

The chairman of the Conference was called upon and said: "The program was planned so that we might have a conference that was as fruitful and as relaxed and as complete as possible. You will notice that there are no luncheon or dinner meetings. . . . There are groups that wish to get together tonight . . . the Housing Committee is calling a meeting. . . . I think there would be no reason why any group that wished to meet on any of the subject matters of this conference, or on anything else, should not schedule meetings in the time not already scheduled for official meetings of the conference. I think as far as these discussions are concerned we shall have to decide where we are in the state of our minds at this time on the questions that are before us and go as far as we can."

Time for adjournment found the discussion leader saying, ". . . we will get farther as we go through the rest of the conference; but I have caught no indication in any of the discussion that any of us here as social workers do not have the conviction that the provision of a decent standard of living through adequate income is a test of any social economic system. Our questions are matters of procedure and matters of timing. . . ."

## DELEGATE CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSION

THE delegates turned from questions of economic security, welfare programs and relief needs to related professional matters in Association administration at the business session on Saturday evening, February 16. Two proposals by the Executive Committee for revision of the By-Laws were before them: (1) To increase the national membership dues from \$5.00 to \$7.50 for full members and from \$3.00 to \$5.00 for junior members, with provision that chapters be reimbursed \$1.50, making a net increase to the national association of \$1.00; (2) To discontinue applications for junior membership beginning July 1, 1935.

In opening this session Miss Kahn said:

As we face the business of revising the By-Laws, I would like to share with you a feeling that has been growing with me as I have worked with the Association this year after a lapse of several years in active work on the Executive Committee. It seems to me that the work of our Association has grown as social work has grown. As our interests extend themselves over the country and over a wider variety of subject matter, so activities of the Association have been expanded almost beyond our capacities to keep up with them. The machinery for making these interests effective is machinery which was determined at a time when we were a relatively small group with a fairly limited set of objectives and a fairly experimental attitude toward what we were undertaking to do. As we become more conscious of ourselves in relation to subject matter and more conscious of ourselves

as professional persons, we find ourselves limited by machinery, chiefly by our capacities to act through the machinery of the Association. We all have full time jobs and if we feel certain inadequacies, as I do in my capacity, and as practically every committee chairman does, it is probably due to our attempts to work effectively through chapters, committees and delegate meetings of this sort with all of the sacrifices to our jobs which these attempts involve and with less effectiveness than we might otherwise have. This, I think, is also a problem to the staff. So much of the time of the staff has to be spent in persuading us to take on a responsibility which is a pressing concern of the Association, and in the long run, leadership lies there. This thought might serve as a background for the things we are going to do tonight.

We are bringing up for consideration the revision of two parts of our By-Laws which govern our procedure. We are still in a stage of almost violent growth. We should approach these subjects in terms of where we are going as a professional Association with the limitations of machinery we now have in staff for the pursuance of professional objectives.

### PROPOSAL TO INCREASE DUES

Leroy Ramsdell, as Treasurer of the Association, presented the proposal for increasing the dues to the Association which was outlined in *The Compass* of November, 1934. In support of the proposal Mr. Ramsdell said:

It seems to me that our Association stands at an important dividing of ways in its career. On the one hand, we have a branch-off, whether to the left or right

I know not, which represents as we approach it tonight a definite change in one of the basic elements of our strength—namely, the dues by which our activities are supported. There is on the other hand what appears to be a road straight ahead, but there is reason to feel that the road straight ahead which involves no change may have a turning not so very far away which will lead us back in the direction from which we have come.

The basic considerations involved in this proposal have already been presented to you in *The Compass* and I judge from various reports we have had that they have been extensively discussed in the chapters. I shall not attempt to read or summarize those but will try to emphasize in the briefest possible way the major points involved.

The Executive Committee sometime ago took cognizance of the necessity of doing something about this problem in the interests of keeping the Association on a forward-going road. It inspected the program of the Association as it had been approved by the membership. The elements of this program you know in a general way. In addition to the general problems of administration, there is first and foremost the factor of maintaining and promoting the membership of the organization. That together with the general administrative duties I take it would be an irreducible minimum of activity without which the Association could have no existence whatever. In addition to those basic elements, the program includes a Division on Government and Social Work, the activities of which need no description, a Division on Personnel Standards, and a Division on Employment Practices into the activities of which you were given some insight in this afternoon's discussion, and there are in any given year usually a number of other items or special projects.

I thought you might be interested in an approximate breakdown of the budget given in lump sums in the reprint you have, in terms of these six major departments or functions in the Association's program. As nearly as I can estimate them, they are as follows:

**TOTAL BUDGET FOR 1935..... \$51,950.00**

General Administration .....	\$10,330.00
Membership maintenance and promotion .....	17,850.00
	<hr/>
(These two items form the basic functions for keeping the professional Association in existence.)	\$28,180.00
Division on Government and Social Work.....	6,450.00
(A substantial part of this figure includes a conservative pro-rating of the Executive Secretary's time.)	
Division on Personnel Standards .....	8,320.00
Division on Employment Practices .....	6,000.00
Special Projects .....	3,000.00
(This includes publications and directory of membership.)	

**INCOME TO MEET THE BUDGET**

Actual Income for 1934.....	\$42,831.00
Estimated Income for 1935.....	\$40,400.00

Expenditures necessary to maintain the program as it is now going on require approximately 25 per cent increase in our regular income. We have maintained it thus far due to the fact that by a combination of fortunate circumstances we had somewhat unwittingly accumulated a very modest reserve in the treasury,—a reserve which the Executive Committee consistently has felt, however, should not be kept as reserve but should go back to the members in the form of increased services. That is the problem as it confronted the Executive Committee in terms of carrying on the program which the Association now carries. When it came to a consideration of increasing revenues, the Executive Committee felt that another factor of which it had been long cognizant should be simultaneously considered, namely, the problem of financing local chapter activities.

Chapter dues vary and have been almost everywhere exceedingly difficult to collect from a substantial part of the membership in the chapter territory. This problem is becoming increasingly acute. It seemed to the Executive Committee therefore that it would be very wise to join these two problems and consider meeting them by an increase in the regular basic dues of membership in the Association. It felt that it would be practicable to consider an increase of total dues from \$5 to \$7.50 for regular members with \$1.50 going back to the chapters for chapter dues, eliminating thereby the collection of basic dues by the chapters from their membership. That \$1.50 represents a figure which is higher than most chapter dues and which will apparently give every chapter a larger gross return than they have been able to collect. The other \$1.00 provides presumably 20 per cent more revenue to the National program,—somewhat less than appears necessary. The Executive Committee feels, however, that minor adjustments would make it possible to carry on the program the Association is now carrying with this proportionate addition to the regular revenues. The Executive Committee voted last November to present this to the chapters.

There have been a few returns from chapters who have considered the matter. Because of the fact that of those chapters which have reported any action eight were favorable, and three opposed, it is perfectly evident that honest doubts and objections will be raised to this proposal. It may be suggested that the increase of total revenue is unnecessary, that the budget can be cut down, which is true. It is not absolutely necessary to this Association to carry on its present activities. The Executive Committee is not at all disposed to insist that all these activities be carried on, but it feels that it was the wish of the membership that they should be carried on and that the membership would desire to have the opportunity to express itself as to whether it was willing to finance the present program.

Second, it has been suggested that this proposal to increase the dues all along the line is unfair to those members of the Association whose incomes fall into the lower brackets. In this connection it is pertinent to note that the dues, even at the increased figures, will be substantially lower than those to most other similar professional organizations. More important is it that these dues represent only the minimum cost of program, a program which is significant professionally to all members regardless of which income group they are in. Over and above this minimum rate, there is a large opportunity for those of us who have greater means to contribute larger amounts to the activities of our local chapters. That seems to be the simplest and most practical way for providing for those who are able to do more. Attempting to provide in the By-Laws for a graduated scale of regular basic dues, so far as

your Executive Committee can see, is a quite impossible method of setting the basic dues of the Association.

Third, it may be suggested that it is improper for this question to be acted upon by this Delegate Conference. As to the technical propriety there is of course no question because the By-Laws specifically provide that such a question may be considered. Behind that is the question of the actual justice of such a group taking action. There is this point to be considered, namely, that in the main the delegates represent those members of the chapters who have carried the major part of the load in the local communities, whereas a mail vote would represent in the majority those members of the Association who have been less active in chapter affairs and have done less to promote chapter activity.

Mr. Ramsdell, seconded by Mr. Bedinger, moved the amendment to increase the dues.

Ellery Reed, a member of the Executive Committee, opposed the motion in the following statement:

I fear some of my fellow members on the Executive Committee regard me as conservative. I have protested from time to time expanding the national budget so rapidly. I regret the necessity of having to face an increase of our national dues at the present time. Three years ago we had a budget of about \$30,000, with a surplus of a few thousand. This surplus rapidly expanded to \$11,000 with the increase of membership. We then set in on a period of rapid expansion. The increased activities have been undertaken in good faith and with the sole purpose of better service to the membership and the profession and from this angle I have no objection. I cannot here go into detail, but I have had a feeling that we were expanding too rapidly. I hope I am wrong, but am not convinced, for instead of a surplus we are now faced with a budget of over \$50,000, which means a deficit almost as great as the surplus a year ago. It seems to me that one function of such a surplus as we have recently had might well have been to make unnecessary the raising of dues in such a time as the present.

Father Butler has made the statement that the amount would be very small on a daily basis. This sounds like a public utilities argument. It does mount up on a yearly basis and does come due at one time.

There are two propositions in this proposed amendment: one for the collection of chapter dues by national headquarters and on that I have no strong feeling. There are arguments on both sides. For example, it may be worth more than we realize in terms of developing interest in the local chapters that there be some struggle to collect dues. Contacts are made which might otherwise be neglected, and perhaps there is some tendency for interest to follow dues. On the other hand the chapters will undoubtedly get more money and be saved much trouble, if this plan is adopted.

The second proposition in the amendment is that of increasing the national dues. My objection is not primarily against increasing the dues if this could be done in the right way. Our national organization could undoubtedly be more effective if more adequately supported. My chief objection is to increasing the national dues by vote of the Delegate Conference. It is only fair to say that several members of the Executive Committee have taken the same position, and that the views of this minority group did not get expression in *The Compass*. If we vote through this amendment to-night there is danger that we will not have expressed the majority opinion and feeling of the Association membership at large. First, I understand that the largest

chapter in the country failed to instruct its delegates at all on this question, and there may be others in the same position. In chapter meetings where it has been discussed, I fear that the younger and more poorly paid members may not have felt free to express themselves. I believe therefore that this is a question that should be settled by a referendum vote by mail of the entire membership.

I believe at the same time that there should be submitted to the membership an alternative plan of a simple graduated system of dues. It would be impracticable from the administrative standpoint to make exemptions for dependents. Many of the lower paid members, as well as the higher paid members, have such obligations. Merely for illustration, I would suggest not raising the dues at all for members whose salaries are less than \$2000; for those from \$2000 to \$4000 an assessment of \$8 to \$10; from \$4000 to \$6000, \$12 to \$15; and over \$6000, \$20 to \$25. Even this would not represent a percentage assessment for the higher paid members.

Last year this Conference went on record as favoring the graduated income tax. I believe many of our younger members, although appreciative of the real values of the Association membership, also feel that they must maintain membership or sacrifice professional advancement. Consequently the dues take on something of the nature of a tax. I wonder then if we are willing to apply the principle of the graduated income tax to ourselves?

The injustice of flat rate dues appears when we consider that \$7.50 dues would be  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of a month's salary for members receiving salaries of \$100 per month, while it would be only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent for members receiving salaries of \$500 per month. If members receiving \$6000 salaries paid dues on the same percentage basis as we are proposing for the \$1200 members they would pay not \$7.50, but \$37.50. If the rank and file of our membership wish to support this organization out of all proportion to their income through a flat rate dues system, well and good; they should have that privilege, but I want to be very sure that that is their preference.

In discussing the motion, delegates reported on the points of view of chapters which had considered the proposal in advance of the Delegate meeting. The Cleveland chapter urged that a return of \$2.50 instead of \$1.50 be made to chapters which employ paid executive secretaries.

A roll call vote on the motion was then called for. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of those voting was required to pass the motion since it involved an amendment to the By-Laws. Fifty-eight delegates voted in favor of the amendment, while 31 delegates voted against it, a total of 89 votes. Sixty votes were therefore needed to pass the amendment so that the proposal to raise the dues was lost.

The vote by chapters and delegates was as follows:

FOR AMENDMENT TO THE BY-LAWS—58	
Chapter	Delegate
Alabama	Lavinia Keys
Arkansas	Miss Erle Chambers
Los Angeles	Frances Hoyne
Northern California	Aleta Brownlee
	Mary Leete

Chapter	Delegate
Colorado Springs	Alice VanDiest
Denver	Mrs. Neva Potter
Fairfield County	Margaret Warner
Hartford	Mrs. Laura Briggs
New Haven	Byron Hacker
Delaware	Alice Rue
Washington, D. C.	Walter Ufford
Florida	Elwood Street
Atlanta	Marcus Fagg
Indianapolis	Edward Kahn
Iowa State	Bertha Leming
New Orleans	Ina Tyler
Boston	Florence Sytz
Worcester	Katharine Hardwick
Detroit	Helen Crockett
	H. Rosemary Stackpoole
	Harold Silver
Twin City	Mrs. Kathleen Lowrie
Kansas City	Mrs. Mildred Mudgett
St. Louis	Lorna May Tuttle
New York State Division	C. Whit Pfeiffer
Buffalo	W. W. Burke
New York City	P. H. Byrns
Rochester	Carl Rogers
Syracuse	Rev. Leo A. Geary
No. Carolina	Marguerite Gane
Columbus	George Rabinoff
Dayton	M. J. Karpf
Lehigh Valley	Mrs. Henrietta Mayfield
Philadelphia	Elinor Blackman
	Gordon Hamilton
	Mary L. Gibbons
Pittsburgh	Sara James
Reading	Mrs. Ruth Boretti
So. Carolina	Mary Kelley
Nashville	Lily E. Mitchell
Lynchburg-Roanoke	Elinor Hixenbaugh
Seattle-Tacoma	Chester Brown
	Mrs. Janet Thorson
	Kenneth Pray
	George Bedinger
	Joseph Beck
	Isabel Kennedy
	Mary Clark Burnett
	Helen Shackleford
	Leila Johnson
	Mary Ratterman
	Mary Gibbs
	Marian Hathaway
<i>Non-Chapter Delegates</i>	
Louisiana	Rebecca Cassell
North Dakota	Pearl Salsberry
W. Virginia	Cora Rowzee
Wisconsin	Borghild Boe
<b>AGAINST AMENDMENT TO THE BY-LAWS—31</b>	
Chapter	Delegate
Los Angeles	Rev. Thomas O'Dwyer
Chicago	James Nicholson
	Elizabeth Webster
	Mrs. Sara Schaar
	Merton Trast
	Elizabeth Hughes
	Virginia Frank
Illinois State	Effie Doan
Baltimore	Gertrude Glick
New Jersey	Elizabeth Rodgers
	Leonora Rubinow
	Jessie Condit
	Maud Bryan Foote
Fort Orange	Agnes Penrose

Northeastern Pennsylvania	Rev. William Walsh
Twin City	Gertrude Vaile
New York City	Mary Van Kleeck
	C. W. Areson
	Charles Fastov
	Clara Rabinowitz
Akron	Heloise Hendershot
Cincinnati	Ruth Jones
Cleveland	Mrs. Anna Budd Ware
	Elizabeth Magee
	J. M. Costello
	Helen Hanchette
	Margaret Johnson
Toledo	Clark Mock
Rhode Island	Minnie Byrne
Milwaukee	Clarence Pretzer
	Benjamin Glassberg

\* \* \*

The following recapitulation of the vote shows 35 chapters voting in favor of the amendment to increase the dues, 12 voting against it, 3 divided, 1 not voting and 5 not answering the roll call. Thirteen chapters were not represented at the Conference.

#### Chapters whose delegates voted for the motion:

Alabama	1	Kansas City	1
Arkansas	1	St. Louis	2 (3)
No. California	2	N. Y. State	1
Colorado Springs	1	Buffalo	2
Denver	1	Rochester	2
Fairfield County	1	Syracuse	1
Hartford	1	N. Carolina	1
New Haven	1	Columbus	1
Delaware	1	Dayton	1
Washington, D. C.	2	Lehigh Valley	1
Florida	1	Philadelphia	3 (4)
Atlanta	1	Pittsburgh	2
Indianapolis	1	Reading	1
Iowa	1	S. Carolina	1
New Orleans	1	Nashville	1
Boston	1 (3)	Lynchburg	
Worcester	1	Roanoke	1
Non-Chapter	4	Seattle	1
Detroit	3		

The figures in parenthesis show the number of votes to which the chapter was entitled, when all the votes were not cast.

#### Delegates from the following chapters voted against the motion to increase the dues:

Chicago	6	Cincinnati	2
Illinois	1 (2)	Cleveland	5
Baltimore	2	Toledo	1
New Jersey	3	N. E. Pennsylvania	1
Fort Orange	1	Rhode Island	1
Akron	1	Milwaukee	1 (2)

#### Chapters in which there were divided votes:

	FOR	AGAINST
Los Angeles (4)	1	1
Twin City	2	1
New York City (12)	6	4

#### Chapter present but not voting:

Madison

Chapters with representatives registering at the Conference but not answering the roll call:

Grand Rapids	North Texas
Erie	Richmond
Harrisburg	Non-chapter—1

Chapters not represented at the Conference:

San Diego	Nebraska
Hawaii	Oklahoma
Wichita	Oregon
Louisville	Memphis
S. E. Massachusetts	South Texas
Western Massachusetts	Salt Lake City
Arrowhead	

**PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP**

The proposal of the Executive Committee to discontinue junior membership beginning July 1, 1935, on the basis of the considerations outlined in the November, 1934, *Compass* was the next business before the meeting.

The considerations which led the Executive Committee to recommend this action relate to the present tendency of employing and certifying agencies to substitute the junior or partial professional standard for the full membership standard and the possibility that this use of the junior standard will tend to fix this lower level as the maximum professional standard required by employing agencies and specified in voluntary or legal certification systems which may be set up. The existence of two levels of professional membership in the Association has led to confusion in standards of professional education as well as in standards of employment. Many colleges and universities have developed just enough of a social work curriculum to meet the junior membership requirements though they have not been prepared to set up a curriculum which would qualify students for full membership. Thus the junior requirements have tended to stimulate the organization of social work curricula with very limited professional content thereby weakening the standards of professional education which the profession has been endeavoring to build up.

To clarify confusion within the field and in the minds of the public, the proposal was made by the Executive Committee that the Association insure a single, readily understood professional standard by discontinuing the junior membership classification.

The motion to amend the By-Laws to eliminate the junior membership classification beginning July 1, 1935 was made by Gordon Hamilton.

Various points of view were expressed in the discussion. Some delegates felt that social work is not sufficiently advanced for a single professional standard which can be attained by relatively few persons in the field and that junior membership should be maintained to enable the

interested younger group to affiliate with the professional organization. Others felt that the only way to advance social work would be through the support of the full professional standard by the Association and the efforts made by the Association to have this standard recognized by the public.

Still another point of view was expressed by some delegates challenging the present professional training basis altogether and preferring junior membership chiefly because there is less emphasis on preparation than in full membership.

The suggestion was made that the proposal to discontinue junior membership should be considered in relation to the proposal to establish a pre-professional standard and a qualifying affiliated group, as in the plan for an "index of provisional social workers," since they are two aspects of the question of applied standards. (The outcome of the discussion on the index at another session is noted in the section below.)

Both proposals were made in order to clarify the confusion which has resulted from the very rapid expansion of social agencies and the large number of new workers brought in to the field by this expansion. With no standards to guide agencies in the selection of workers without professional equipment whom they were obliged to employ, on the one hand, and with the tendency on the part of agencies to specify "AASW membership" for important positions without differentiating between junior and full membership, on the other hand, a new approach seemed to be needed to meet existing conditions. The index was therefore suggested as a method of setting a pre-professional standard to be used as a guide by employing agencies and to provide an informal basis of affiliation with the AASW for a much larger number of new workers than can qualify for junior membership under present conditions. The corollary to this suggestion of a pre-professional standard seemed to be a single professional standard, eliminating the compromise and confusion of the junior membership standard. Time did not permit of exploring of the junior membership proposal in connection with the index and when the motion to discontinue junior membership was put it was lost by 18 votes in favor of the motion to 60 votes opposed.

**"INDEX OF PROVISIONAL SOCIAL WORKERS"**

The principle involved in the proposal to establish a pre-professional standard by which qualifying people might affiliate with AASW (the plan identified as the "index of provisional social workers") was discussed at the Saturday afternoon session on Personnel Standards and Practices instead of at the business session. This arrangement was made because of the fact that the proposed plan, which has been under discus-

sion in chapters, is closely related to other problems of personnel standards, including professional education, civil service and certification, which the Division on Personnel Standards submitted for discussion by the delegates. The outcome of the discussion is recorded here because of its bearing on the administrative proposals which came before the business meeting, particularly the proposal to discontinue junior membership (see section above).

Discussion of the proposal to establish a pre-

### Conference Discussion Material

Delegates to the Washington Conference were supplied with considerable discussion material bearing on the subject matter of the Conference. As much of this material as was ready in advance was published in the January, 1935, *Compass*, reprints of which were sent to each delegate. The remaining material was placed in the hands of the delegates at the Conference. Helen Crosby, Secretary of the Planning Committee, carried the responsibility for the selection of discussion material, and of arrangements for preparing it for the use of the delegates, in cooperation with the national office. The value of the material selected, on which many delegates commented, is due mainly to Miss Crosby's able supervision of this part of the Conference preparations.

A list of all the discussion material supplied to delegates is given below:

#### Reprints from January, 1935, "Compass"

1. Summary of Provisions of the Economic Security Bill (S.1130).
2. National Relief Policies.
3. The New "Works Bill" (H.J.Res. 117).
4. Analysis of the Workers' Unemployment, Old Age and Social Insurance Act (H.R. 2827).
5. National Housing Program.
6. Professional Standards in Social Work.
7. Employment Practices in Social Work.

#### Material Supplied to Delegates at Conference.

8. Current Relief Statistics. Prepared by Mary Johnston, Charity Organization Department, Russell Sage Foundation.
9. Statement on A National Social Welfare Program. Prepared by Harry Lurie.
10. Occupational Characteristics of Persons Receiving Relief, May, 1934. Prepared by Dr. John H. Mueller, Research Analyst, FERA, assigned by Howard Myers, Research Division, FERA.
11. The Administration's Relief and Security Program. Abstract.
12. Report of Committee on Organization of Facilities for Medical Care and Health

professional standard was not very vigorous, due perhaps to the very full agenda at this session and to difficulty in divorcing the principle of a pre-professional standard from the specific "index" proposal and its possible defects. On the whole, the delegates seemed to feel they had insufficient understanding of the plan and the way it would operate and therefore, in a "sense of the meeting" vote, expressed their opinion that the matter should be referred back to the chapters for further discussion.

#### Services for the Community as a Whole. Prepared by New Orleans Chapter.

13. The Work and Relief Program. Report of Committee on Current Relief Problems, Division on Government and Social Work.
14. The Last Line of Defense in the Security Program. Report of Cincinnati Chapter Committee on Government and Social Work.
15. Questions Regarding Grievance Procedure. Prepared by Committee on Grievance Procedure, Division on Employment Practices.
16. Pending State Legislation on Administrative Agencies. From material supplied by Marietta Stevenson, American Public Welfare Association.\*

### Extra-Program Meetings

#### Meetings on Subject Matter of Conference

Three extra meetings, developing out of subject matter under discussion, were called during the Conference. One grew out of the discussion of "maximum" and "minimum" security programs at the first session in which there was disagreement as to whether the total national income was sufficient to support the provisions of the Lundein Bill. A special evening meeting was arranged for those who wished to consider the economic possibilities of this Bill in greater detail.

A special meeting on housing was called for those interested in this subject and one on employment practices out of which came the statement on employment practices which was accepted by the Conference for incorporation in the Preliminary Report.

#### Meeting of Chapter Chairmen

A special meeting of chapter chairmen present at the Delegate Conference was arranged by Father Leo A. Geary, Chairman of the Buffalo Chapter. The discussion was focussed on ways

\* Miss Stevenson has prepared lists of other social measures pending in the various states, including bills for the blind, the aged, child welfare, unemployment insurance and relief. These lists, by states, can be secured on request to Miss Stevenson, American Public Welfare Association, 850 East 58th Street, Chicago.

and means by which more effective use might be made of material which is being supplied from the national office. The group expressed the opinion that this material is extremely valuable and that maximum use should be made of it in developing chapter programs and activities.

It was the conclusion of those present at the meeting that more direct relationship between the chapter officers and the national office was essential to effective use of the material. The following recommendations were made by the group:

That the national office consider seriously bi-monthly issues of the *Compass* and include more summaries of the discussion material sent through from national headquarters.

That in future Delegate Conferences, the Committee on Planning consider the possibility of inter-chapter meetings of chapter chairmen, delegates and alternates who are members of chapter committees corresponding to national committees, etc.

It is recommended that the Executive Committee consider ways and means of developing wider participation of chapter members in national committee activities by arranging that the membership of certain national committees be made up largely from the same general territory.

It was also recommended that national headquarters plan to make available, through careful routing, speakers who will talk on subjects related to the discussion material and an exchange of speakers on special subjects might well be arranged between chapters.

A report of this meeting, together with the recommendations, has been sent to all chapter chairmen, asking for their comments on the recommendations and also for other suggestions they may have regarding ways in which the inter-relationship of the chapters and the national office can best be promoted.

It is hoped that the proposal for future meetings of chapter chairmen can be put into operation in time to have a meeting at the National Conference in Montreal as well as at future delegate meetings.

Chapter chairmen present at the Delegate Conference in Washington and participating in the meeting called by Father Geary were: Rev. Leo A. Geary, Buffalo; James T. Nicholson, Chicago; Chester R. Brown, Dayton; Harold Silver, Detroit; Marcus C. Fagg, Florida; Mrs. Laura Brownell Briggs, Hartford; C. Whit Pfeiffer, Kansas City; Mrs. Janet K. Thorson, Lehigh Valley; Byron T. Hacker, New Haven; Leonora Rubinow, New Jersey; Beatrice Hodge, New Orleans; George W. Rabinoff, Acting Chairman, New York City; Dr. Carl Rogers, New York

State Council; Lily E. Mitchell, North Carolina; Mrs. Ruth Boretti, Rochester; Minnie Byrne, Toledo; Lorna May Tuttle, Twin City.

#### Executive Committee Meetings

Two meetings of the Executive Committee were held at the time of the Conference.

At an all day meeting the day before the Conference opened special consideration was given to the Conference Planning Committee's recommendations, the issues to come before the Delegate Conference Business meeting, and business and progress reports on regular work underway.

At a breakfast meeting on the last day of the Conference the Executive Committee took up some of the implications of the Conference up to that point and of the outcome of the Business Meeting with relation to problems of current administration. Problems of procedure were noted for further study.

## TESTIMONY ON SECURITY MEASURES

At the first of the Executive Committee's meeting reports included Miss Kahn's statement on the testimony which she had given before the Senate Finance Committee. She explained that in giving her testimony she had concentrated on the assistance provisions in the Bill, particularly Old Age Assistance and Aid to Dependent Children, rather than on the provisions for Unemployment Insurance and Old Age Pensions. This emphasis in testimony was agreed upon after discussions with the Division on Government and Social Work and the Ad Interim Committee because both Committees felt it was important to point out the inadequate coverage of this Bill, particularly if the Works Bill is passed without any provision for federal aid to states for relief. Since there have been no hearings on the Works Bill, the hearings on the Security Bill offered the only opportunity social workers have had to point out that the residual relief load under the proposed works program, will be far greater than the states can carry, that the federal aid provided for various categories in the Security Bill is hopelessly inadequate to meet this need, both in amount and in groups covered, and that continued federal aid to states for general assistance programs is needed to meet existing conditions and should be the responsibility of a permanent federal agency which could thereby stimulate the development of modernized and coordinated services for those in need.

In connection with issues that were before the Delegate Conference, it should also be noted that testimony regarding the failure of present Administration measures to provide coverage for large masses of the population now on relief was given by Harry Lurie at a hearing before the

Miss Mary E Murphy  
848 No Dearborn St  
Chicago Ill

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## THE COMPASS

March, 1935

House Labor Committee on the Lundeen Bill. Mr. Lurie, as did Miss Kahn, analyzed the present relief load and the probable residual load under the works program and discussed what would happen to the 2½ million he estimated would be in residual group if this burden were shifted back on to the states and local governments. He also discussed the unemployment insurance provisions of the Economic Security Bill, emphasizing the fact that as this was a long-time measure, it would have no effect on the immediate situation, and also pointing out what he felt were the inadequacies and objectionable features in the measure. He supported the Lundeen Bill on the ground that it is based on principles which are sound if economic security is to be achieved and that it is immediately applicable to present conditions of need and distress.

### *The Follow-up Begins*

As a first step in carrying forward some of the policies outlined in the Preliminary Report of the Delegate Conference, a letter has been sent by the Association to all Senators, urging an amendment to the Works Bill (H.J.Res. 117) to provide for continued federal aid to the states for relief as well as for a public employment program. Copies of the letter were sent to the chapters suggesting that they might wish to take similar action since the Senate had announced that it wished to hear from the country on the bill. No open hearings were held on the Works Bill so that this is the first opportunity social workers have had to express to the Senators their opinions regarding the issues at stake. The letter is given below:

February 26, 1935.

Dear Senator:

This Association urges that Appropriation Resolution H.J. Res. 117 be amended so that in addition to a work program, the federal government will continue to provide aid to states as under the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933.

May we emphasize first that it is most desirable wherever possible to provide work for those who are in need because they are unemployed, and for that reason the social workers of the nation would favor a large public employment program.

The main point of this letter, however, is to register as emphatically as possible the fact that a relief program must be the basic security and protective measure for those now unemployed and otherwise in need due to the depression. Relief should be the basic provision for these persons with employment being substituted wherever possible. The reason for this is that work cannot be provided in the kind, the place, or the time that it is necessary to have it to meet the requirements

of all those who need it. It would require a program as flexible as a relief program to meet the needs of persons as those needs arise.

Under the program as it has been proposed the states would be required to provide the necessary relief. This plan could function satisfactorily only in case the necessary relief were reduced to a very low figure and to a comparatively few of those now unemployed. Estimates based on a study of the FERA figures and on actual practice in relief operations indicate that fifty per cent would be a reasonable estimate of the number of relief families whose needs could be cared for by a work program. This does not mean that any reflection should be cast on the character of these families but that problems of health, age, and combinations of social hazards must be taken into consideration. The burden for such an immense relief program could not be borne by many of the states.

In our opinion the federal government should provide a public employment program which would be separate from the relief program and which should be offered to all those who are unemployed regardless of whether or not they are at present receiving relief. This work would be different from work relief. Work should be in real jobs, paid for at prevailing rates, and workers should be selected on the basis of fitness for work rather than on the basis of need. Otherwise it is bad relief and bad work.

The United States Employment Service and Re-employment Service should be relied on as the means for seeing that workers on the public employment program are absorbed by private industry as soon as private jobs are available. This can be accomplished by applying the principle of compulsory and regular registration for all those on public work projects and all able-bodied persons in relief families. It is better to use this kind of machinery than to impose such conditions on relief and work relief that families will be driven to private industry, particularly when private industry cannot absorb them.

The worst thing about relief is that it is needed. But it is far better to maintain a relief program than to abandon those who are unable to obtain real jobs in public or private employment to the inadequate and precarious resources of local poor relief or private philanthropy. With the continued help of the federal government the states and local governments could be assisted to develop prompt, certain, adequate, and properly administered relief.

We urge therefore that H.J.Res. 117 be amended so that not less than \$2,880,000,000 shall be made available through the FERA or its successor as grants to the various states for general relief and assistance purposes. We would welcome also a large additional appropriation for a public employment program.

Respectfully yours,

WALTER WEST,  
Executive Secretary

The February issue of *The Compass* has been omitted so that the March issue is Number 6 of Volume XVI.